

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 02810 161310Z
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E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION

THE DEATH IN DETENTION OF SOUTH AFRICA'S BLACK MILITANT,
STEVEN BIKO, CONTINUE TO DRAW CONDEMNATION HERE.

THE AFRICAN NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA YESTERDAY
ISSUED A STRONG CONDEMNATION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT
AND DESCRIBED MR. BIKO'S DEATH AS "A BARBAROUS ASSASSINATION."

IN A STATEMENT ISSUED HERE AND SIGNED BY ANC DEPUTY GENERAL
SECRETARY, DUMA NOKWE, THE ORGANIZATION CHARGED: "THE
ASSASSINATION IN PRISON BY FASCIST KRUGER (MINISTER OF
JUSTICE) AND VORSTER (PRIME MINISTER), ONCE MORE DEMONSTRATES
THE FACT THAT THE REGIME HAD DECIDED TO PURSUE ITS
SAVAGE METHOD OF EXECUTING ITS STAUNCH OPPONENTS WITHOUT
WAITING FOR THE APPEARANCE BEFORE EVEN A SEMBLANCE OF A
COURT."

ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT
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COMMENT ON MR. BIKO'S DEATH, THE TWO NATIONAL DAILIES
TODAY COMMENT ON THE MATTER AND BOTH BLAME IT ON THE
APARTHEID GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA.

THE PARTY NEWSPAPER, THE TIMES OF ZAMBIA,
COMMENTS THAT "SOUTH AFRICA S CHIEF EXECUTIONER",
JUSTICE MINISTER KRUGER IS NOT FOOLING ANYBODY WHEN HE

SAYS PRETORIA IS WORRIED ABOUT WORLD REACTION TO THE
"MURDER" OF MR. BIKO.

NOTING THAT THERE HAS BEEN WHAT IT CALLS "UNPRECEDENTED
WESTERN CONDEMNATION OF THE RACIST REGIME," THE TIMES
EDITORIAL WRITES: "HE (KRUGER) MUST KNOW THAT WE
KNOW THAT WHEN HE SPEAKS OF THE "WORLD" HE IS REFERRING
SPECIFICALLY TO THE WEST."

BUT OBSERVES THE PAPER, THE DEATH OF MR. BIKO, WHILE
TEMPORARILY A "CAUSE CELEBRE" OF THE WESTERN POWERS
AND THEIR PRESS, WILL BE FORGOTTEN AS WERE SHARPEVILLE
AND LAST YEAR'S RIOT VICTIMS; AS THE SOUTH AFRICANS
"PLEAD AGAIN THAT THEIR ANTI-COMMUNIST STANCE SURELY
ENTITLES THEM TO WESTERN SYMPATHY."

ACCORDING TO THE TIMES, ONLY THE THREAT OF SOME
DRASTIC ACTION SUCH AS AN OIL EMBARGO COULD FORCE
PRETORIA TO CHANGE.

THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED ZAMBIA DAILY MAIL, SAYS IN AN
EDITORIAL: DESPITE THEIR PROTESTATIONS, THE SOUTH
AFRICAN AUTHORITIES CANNOT DENY RESPONSIBILITY OVER
THE MURDER IN PRISON OF BLACK LEADER STEVE BIKO."

THE PAPER SAYS THE SOUTH AFRICAN POSITION IS FAST
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BECOMING INDEFINABLE ... "WHAT IS HAPPENING IN SOUTH
AFRICA TODAY IS AN ASSAULT ON ALL THAT IS BEST IN
THE HUMAN RACE."

CONCLUDES THE MAIL EDITORIAL: "IT IS IN THE BEST
INTERESTS
OF THE HUMAN RACE TO UNITE AGAINST THE
AFRICAN PERIL."

IN OTHER SOUTHERN AFRICA DEVELOPMENTS, THE PATRIOTIC
FRONT HAS DENIED RESPONSIBILITY OF HIJACKING A BUS
WHICH CAUGHT FIRE AND EXPLODED DURING A GUN BATTLE WITH
RHODESIAN POLICE IN WHICH EIGHT PERSONS DIED AT
TJOLOTJO NEAR BULAWAYO ON TUESDAY.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE FRONT IN LUSAKA YESTERDAY SAID
THAT HE WAS "SHOCKED" TO HEAR THAT CIVILIANS HAD BEEN
KILLED IN THE INCIDENT.

HE SAID NO FREEDOM FIGHTERS WOULD "MURDER" THE PEOPLE
FOR WHOM INDEPENDENCE WAS BEING FOUGHT.

THE MAIL ALSO REPORTS THAT VETERAN BLACK RHODESIAN NATIONALIST, JAMES CHIJEREMA, IS REPORTEDLY EXPECTED TO RETURN TO RHODESIA THIS WEEKEND AFTER 13 YEARS OF SELF-IMPOSED EXILE.

QUOTING THE "ZIMBABWE TIMES," THE MAIL REPORTS THAT THE 58-YEAR OLD FOUNDER MEMBER OF THE FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF ZIMBABWE (FROLIZI) WOULD FLY TO SALISBURY FROM LONDON VIA NAIROBI. MR. CHIKEREMA IS THE FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT OF BISHOP ABEL MUZOREWA'S UNITED AFRICAN NATIONAL COUNCIL (UANC). ITEM USIS LUSAKA.
BURNS

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